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the sacrifices of a great nation in defense of its integrity.

The landscape is admirably painted; the water, leaden and sluggish, seems lifeless beneath that rayless sky, and the water oozes through the patches of sedge and marsh, while the atmosphere is so palpable, that the rain is descending in the very foreground and away to the far distant obscure horizon. We do not remember ever to have seen, except in nature, so splendid an effect of rain. It is the touch of a master hand, and is a literal truth.

In every respect it is a picture of startling excellence; full of character, it fixes the attention, first by its strong individuality, next by the subtle sentiment of its treatment, then by its delicate and bold manipulation, and lastly, by its perfect truthfulness to nature.

The idea has been worked out with strength and refinement, and Mr. Cox may well be proud of possessing so remarkable a picture.

#### WHAT THEY ARE DOING AT THE THEATRES.

When we look at the record of the daily press, and see several columns of announcements, and when we know that 30,000 people nightly visit places of public amusement in this city, it is natural to suppose that some great attraction must be offered in each of these places, and that managers are individually doing their best to engage public attention. We cannot enter a theatre and not find it crowded, and with the spectacle before us of one mediocre play, only redeemed by good scenic display and a better ballet than we had yet seen in this country, running 500 nights, we must think, on a review of the matter, that New York is easily pleased, and takes strongly after the boy who was found sleeping at the playhouse night after night, and on being questioned as to his motive, said it was because he had a season ticket.

A New York public is the easiest pleased in the world. Our theatres, while they should be, for the patronage bestowed on them, the best, are surpassed again and again by provincial edifices; and, in many cases, our metropolitan companies are sufficiently bad to stock a wandering troupe, who would aspire to nothing better than barn-acting. Our managerial system is so entirely devoid of improvement or practical effect in bringing forward good actors, that under its workings we must never hope to see the case improved. If a man had the genius of Garrick or Kean, he could have no hope to appear on the New York stage in a prominent rôle, except he had money to buy his *entrée*. One would suppose this would be altered when we know that the American idea runs strongly toward making pets of certain members of his favor-

ite theatrical company, and that his judgment is always nice as to the peculiar excellencies of each. Mr. John Oxenford, the dramatic editor of the *London Times*, who lately visited this country, speaks of this fact in one of his letters. He says:

"With all their ardent love for theatrical amusements, I have no hesitation in saying that the Americans care much more for the actors than for the merits of the play itself. This predilection is consistently accompanied by a regard less to a perfect *ensemble* than to the excellency of the 'star' of the evening; and granted the almost impossible case of a theatrical critic devoting the whole of his notices to the exclusive exaltation of one particular artist at the expense of every other member of the profession, New York would offer a fine field for his exertions, with, however, this drawback—that he would be answered by literary opponents in a plain 'show-up' kind of style, totally unlike anything in the old country. Youth and personal appearance have much to do with the success of a female artist, and, I fear, are allowed to overbalance the proper estimation of talent. At the present day, no performer who is regarded as *passé* in London should look for success in America unless backed by a reputation sufficiently large to awaken universal curiosity."

In all this, Mr. Oxenford has written nothing but truth; but in the expression hazarded in the last paragraph, he is wrong. We are having *passé* English performers thrust down our throats every day, and shall continue to receive them strongly as long as they are properly managed. We cannot cite a better instance of this fact than the success of the Howard Pauls.

We commenced this homily simply from the fact that week after week goes over in New York, and the dramatic critic may sit down to his task with "nothing stirring but stagnation." He must content himself with a simple announcement. What shall he say about the "Black Crook," "The Devil's Auction," "The Duchess," etc., etc., save that they still run, and that crowds still rush nightly to the houses where they are played. What shall we say about Wallack's, except that having brought out two stupid English plays to commence the season, and failed with them, they have now tabooed all authors of both English and native mould, except they have pleased our grandfathers, in which case the management acts on the principle of the old lady who said to the boy, "What, not like horse beans? why, your father liked 'em."

There is one little experiment in the theatrical way, which the press has done little for, but yet has reached a successful issue by its pure merit, and a knowledge of what the public want. We allude to the Fifth Avenue Theatre. This house, with a small but neat company, manages to fill itself nightly, with a most fashionable audience, and to give them pleasant burlesque nicely done, with some new faces and some

old ones. Leffingwell has no equal on the stage in that line, and with Mrs. Sedley Brown and Millie Sackett, they do "Cinderella," "Aladdin," and like pieces, in a style that must be permanently attractive.

One of the successes and attractions of New York is the "Pilgrim's Progress," now exhibiting at the corner of Fifteenth Street and Broadway. The quiet announcements emanating from the managers of this affair do not lead the public to expect what they really receive. A series of paintings, many of which are beautifully executed, illustrate the passage of the Pilgrim, accompanied by singing, and the aid of a lecturer, who would, by the by, be more agreeable to his audience if he had less of the drawl, and paid a little more attention to pronunciation than he might not mistake a mountain for a "mounting," and so forth. The paintings, as they pass in review, are illuminated, and the transformation scene at the end is equal to anything of the kind ever shown upon the New York stage. It is something that every child should see, and every grown person would be pleased with, and satisfied that they could not spend a couple of hours more pleasantly or profitably.

#### FOREIGN GOSSIP.

*Le Figaro* says some very pleasant things about the debut of Mdlle. Irma Marié at the Theatre Lyrique, Paris. Irma Marié is the sister of Galli Marié, who has already made her mark on Parisian attention. She came out in the "Enchanted Flute," on the 12th ult., when, as *Figaro* says, the house was full with dilettanti, musical fanatics and votaries of art—a difficult jury to please, but please she did, nevertheless, and passed the ordeal with the most positive honors.

The last benefit of Mdlle. Schnieder at the Varieties, in the "Grand Duchess" produced her the very pleasant little sum 10,200 francs. The applause was wondrous, the bouquets without number.

BOUCICAULT is agitating the Parisian literary, musical and dramatic public on the subject of an International Copyright, so as to make it better for all those who live by their brains in both countries. It is a pity we have not a Boucicault in this country.

M<sup>ME</sup>. ARNOULD PLESSEY is seriously ill. M. Nelaton pronounces her malady as dangerous, without informing the public of its nature.

A SINGER who has long been celebrated in the provinces, M. Melchissedech, died on the 10th ult. at Montpellier.

BERLIOZ has accepted the invitation of the Grand Duchess Helene of Russia to conduct the concerts of the Conservatoire, St. Petersburg, and will leave for that place in December.